

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 12, 2022

The Honorable Matt Cartwright  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science,  
and Related Agencies  
H-310, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Robert B. Aderholt  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science, and Related Agencies  
1036 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Cartwright and Ranking Member Aderholt:

As you continue to negotiate the final Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) appropriations bill, we are writing to urge you to include much-needed assistance to ensure the future economic viability of America's lobster industry and the thousands of communities throughout the New England region whose economies depend on this natural resource.

In response to an Unusual Mortality Event declared by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for the endangered North Atlantic Right Whale, last year the agency finalized a new 10-year regulatory modification to the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP), phasing in a series of new measures – a combination of lobster gear modification requirements and the implementation of a new 1,000 square mile closed area where fishing with vertical lines would be prohibited – to protect the endangered right whale species. Despite the fact that according to NOAA's own data, not a single right whale death has been affirmatively linked to the U.S. lobster fishery, the agency is requiring the lobster industry to reduce the risk it poses to right whales by 98 percent by 2030, which both state officials and lobstermen have [said](#) could altogether eliminate the lobster fishery.

For Maine's lobster fishery, the costs associated with complying with these new regulations is estimated to be nearly \$100 million in the first year alone, which would be devastating to the thousands of lobstermen and women, small business owners already operating under thin margins. The American lobster fishery's overall value exceeds \$600 million per year, generating more than \$2 billion in economic activity and supporting more than 15,500 jobs, including over 7,000 state and federal lobster fishing permit holders in Maine. Unless Congress acts, this historic and iconic industry may no longer exist within the next few decades.

That is why I am requesting \$100 million be included in the FY22 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies appropriations bill for the Northeast lobster fishery to help defray the cost of compliance with the new ALWTRP regulations, including for gear modification, configuration, and marking, direct economic assistance to lobstermen and dependent communities to offset losses from planned area closures, and, and for long-term planning to ensure the economic viability and resiliency of the fishery and dependent communities as they adapt to changing ocean conditions. The use of these funds is consistent with language included in the Senate FY22 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies appropriations bill that was released at the end of last year.

We appreciate your attention to this important matter and look forward to working with you to support this historic and iconic American industry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jared Golden". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Jared Golden  
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chellie Pingree". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C".

Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress